

OPINION

New blood needed

Twenty-two Miltonians honoured by Canadian Blood Services this week should stand as an inspiration to others.

Last night in Hamilton, Canadian Blood Services celebrated local milestone donors of blood and platelets at its 11th annual Honouring Our Lifeblood donor recognition ceremony.

As part of National Blood Donor Week (June 8 to 14), a total of 427 donors received certificates of appreciation for helping meet patient needs.

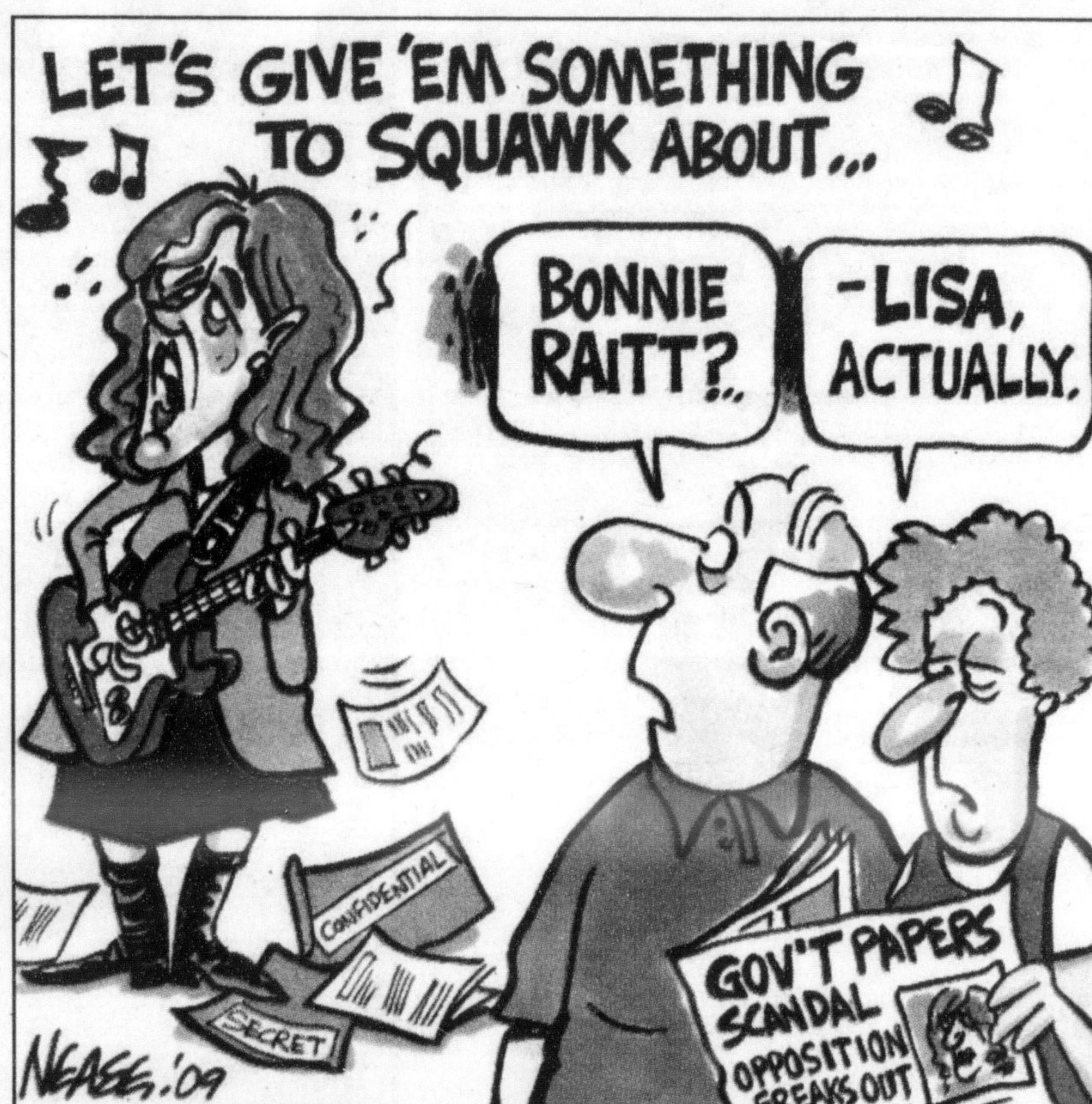
Among this year's honourees were 22 donors from Milton who gave 50 or more times, collectively donating more than 1,400 units of blood or platelets to date. These donors

understand that close to one million blood donations will be needed this year. They're well aware that donors can give blood every 56 days, or six to seven times a year, and that plasma and platelets can be donated more frequently than blood. They make no mistake about the fact that all blood types are needed (A, AB, B and O).

But it's disheartening to learn that while one in two Canadians is eligible to give blood, last year only one in 60 Canadians actually did.

We know we can do way better than that in 2009.

Donors can make an appointment by calling 1-888-2-DONATE (1-888-236-6283).



ReadersWrite

E-mail letters to editorial@miltoncanadianchampion.com. Letters, which may be edited, must include the writer's name, address and phone number.

Each and every firefighter deserves WSIB coverage

DEAR EDITOR:

An issue has come up for firefighters that should be as important to a fire chief as it is for a new recruit.

A couple years ago, the provincial government passed legislation that acknowledged that firefighters were dying of certain cancers and heart disease more than the normal rate, and that these deaths would be accepted by the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) as work-related.

I'm sure through much research it was found that because of the obvious nature of this business, our work environment is causing this high rate of cancer and heart disease.

The legislation covered only full-time firefighters and excluded volunteer and part-time firefighters — which make up a high percentage of Milton's department.

A firefighter is a firefighter. The smoke and toxic gases are the same for everyone.

Over the last couple of years this exclusion was apparently going to be fixed. Wellington-Halton Hills MPP Ted Arnott recently put a motion forward to include volunteer/part-time firefighters and Halton MPP Ted Chudleigh supported it. But on May 14, the Liberals voted it down.

Not long ago we buried one of our

brothers who died of cancer. Who knows if his cancer was fire-related, but statistics show that firefighters have a much greater chance of dying from this disease than other people.

The Ontario government claims that it respects what we do. In the May issue of the Firefighters Association of Ontario magazine, Premier Dalton McGuinty said, "My colleagues and I have enormous respect and appreciation for the vital service that our province's firefighters provide to all of us each and every day."

Lip service is easy; real respect is shown. I urge everyone to make your feelings heard on this issue. Most of us have families and we all have loved ones.

Wouldn't it be reassuring to know that if we did get one of these types of cancers or had a heart attack after a fire call that our family would receive compensation from the WSIB?

The provincial government got it right for full-time firefighters. We must now make them get it right for all firefighters.

Some cancers don't care if you're full-time or part-time. They only look to see if you have on a helmet and bunker gear.

**CAPT. RICK MITCHELL
MILTON**

Not so neighbourly

DEAR EDITOR:

Is neighbourliness on the brink of extinction? Should neighbours ethically share the cost of a fence even though they may not be bound by law?

This past winter has been hard on many of the fences in our neighbourhood, and so there has been a flurry of fence-building activity this spring, including fences on two sides of our property.

Now we've been homeowners for more than 25 years, and when it comes time to paying up — whether a Town bylaw mandates it or not — when asked to contribute we've always done the ethical thing and shared in the cost. It's the neighbourly thing to do, after all. Not to mention it gives us a say in the kind of fence that goes up and gives us a chance to regroup with the neighbours at the end of a long winter.

But beware pool owners in Milton — don't count on that neighbourliness. You're bound by law to maintain a fence around the pool. But what about ethical responsibility from those with whom you share the fence? No problem, we thought. But when we approached a neighbour for help with the cost of our fence, we were turned down flat. Ouch!

I just wanted to offer a heads-up to other pool owners in Milton. Folks, neighbourly neighbours doing the ethical thing isn't a given. It's sad, but true.

**ANNA HILL
MILTON**

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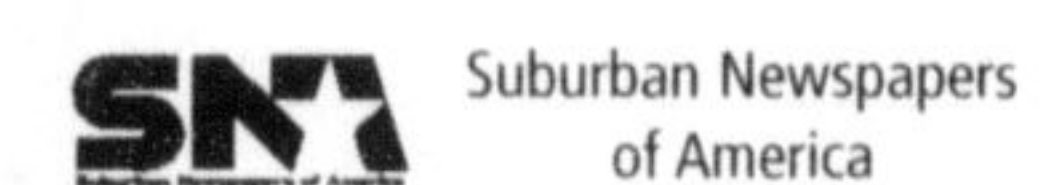
Sandy Pare

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